

ASPIRA TIMELINE

- 1950** The Puerto Rican population reaches over 300,000 on the mainland, concentrated in NYC.
- 1951** Hispanic Young Adults Association, HYAA, is formed by Puerto Rican college students and young professionals in NYC . Later becomes Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs, PRACA.
- 1957** The Puerto Rican Study 1953-1957, co-sponsored by the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education and the Board of Education of the City of New York. The study produced two instruments that helped establish eligibility of New York City public schools for special funds under 1956 amendment to the New York State Education Act. This amendment made state funds available to schools serving children labeled "handicapped," or "delinquent," or "non-English speaking."
- 1957** Puerto Rican Forum formed (First called the Puerto Rican-Hispanic National Forum)
- 1959** Puerto Rican Student Leadership Conferences organized around the city by HYAA.
- 1960** By 1960 Puerto Rican population increases to 900,000. Over two thirds living in NYC. Puerto Rican children reach 14 percent in NYC school system.
- 1961** Three out of 10 stateside residents were born on the continent. Approximately, 46 per cent under 20 years of age.
- 1961** **Aspira** is established in New York City, by the Puerto Rican -Hispanic Leadership Forum as a nonprofit organization to assist Puerto Rican youth to pursue leadership through education.
- 1962** CUSSW, and Fordham School of Social Service each placed one student in the agency to do a Community Organization field placement.
- 1963** Approximately 52 ASPIRA Clubs operate throughout New York City.
- 1964** Civil rights Act is signed
- A Study of Poverty Conditions in the New York Puerto Rican Community, done by the Puerto Rican Forum with small grants from various sources;
 - Puerto Rican Community Development Project formed
 - Puerto Rican Forum, Inc. organizes an 80 member Citizens committee comprised of (prominent leaders) religious, political and youth leadership to become the backbone of a self-help effort.

1964 Proposal submitted to the City of New York Anti-Poverty Operations Board. City of NY approved four of the agencies of the total Puerto Rican Community Development Project.

- Voting Rights Act and Economic Opportunity Act signed.

1965 ASPIRA becomes incorporated, is declared tax-exempt, and establishes its own Board of Directors. Antonia Pantoja, is appointed as first Executive Director.

1966 Scholarship and Loan Center opened with Talent Search Federal Funds

1968. ASPIRA of America, Inc., is created with a \$650,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to expand operations beyond the city.

- Bilingual Education Act Becomes Law

1969 ASPIRA of America establishes affiliate offices in Newark, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Juan. These cities have large concentrations of Puerto Ricans.

- Juan Rosario first director of Aspira of NJ, later becomes National Director
- Louis Nieves becomes Executive Director of Aspira of New York in June 1969
- Aspira affiliate guide is published
- Student representation is increased on the Board of Directors of New York

1970 Board of Aspira of America is separated from Board of New York

- **Puerto Rican** population grows to over 1million. Largest concentration (818 thousand) reside in NYC.
- The Health Careers Program, first launched by ASPIRA of New York, is created on a national scale.
- Aspira College Federation adopts a constitution

1971 Organizations begin to develop their own annual reports Aspira of New York, own report

- **Aspira of NY** opens a center on 14th street for program operations
- The Health Careers Program becomes a national program.
- ASPIRA Clubs Federation students in NY raise \$2,000 for flood victims in Puerto Rico, and collect food and clothing for 1500 refugees.

1972 Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF) files a class action suit against the Board of Education of New York City on Behalf of 15 school children, ASPIRA, and other organizations.

- Luis Alvarez become Executive Director of Aspira America

1974 NY have report The Board of Education of NYC signs the ASPIRA consent decree, agreeing to provide bilingual education for all limited English proficient students in the city schools

1975 Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF) files contempt proceedings against the NYC government for its failure to comply with Consent Decree.

1976 Grizel Ubarry becomes Executive Director of Aspira of New Jersey

- Maria Bonilla Acting Executive Director of NY

1977 Ernesto Loperena Executive Director of Aspira of New York

- An ASPIRA Fellowship Office is opened in Washington, DC, signifying the first time ASPIRA has a continuous representation in the nation's capital. ASPIRA of America study, *Social Factors in Educational Attainment Among Puerto Ricans in the U.S. Metropolitan Areas, 1970*, is released.

- Formation of the National Puerto Rican Coalition

1979 ASPIRA Center for Educational Equity (ACEE) is established in Washington, DC to act as ASPIRA's division for research. ACEE strives to improve the education of Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics.

- Hector Aponte Executive Director of NY

1981 ASPIRA of Florida officially opens it doors as an ASPIRA affiliate in Miami.

- ASPIRA of Pennsylvania begins a three-year study on dropout and delinquency rates among Puerto Rican youth.
- Aspira of Florida officially joins Aspira as an affiliate in Miami
- Institute for Puerto Rican Policy formed.
- National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights formed.

- PRLDEF successfully challenges realignment of electoral districts in NYC. New York City Administration funds Puerto Rican Organization for Research, Education and Self Sufficiency (PROGRESS).

- Roberto Soto Executive Director of Aspira of NY

1983 ASPIRA of New York study, *Racial and Ethnic High School Dropout Rates in New York City*, is released.

- Juan Rosario becomes fourth Executive Director of Aspira of America, Inc. renamed National Association
- Angelo Gonzalez becomes Executive Director of Aspira of New York
- Maria Vizcarrondo de Soto becomes Executive Director of Aspira of New Jersey
- Aspira of America, Inc. discusses relocation to Washington, DC.

1984 ASPIRA of Illinois *Chicago Dropout Study* is released.

- ASPIRA Coca-Cola support services project (Project A.C.C.E.S.S.) is initiated.
- ASPIRA of Puerto Rico examines the dropout rate in a report entitled *La política educativa para el mejoramiento del deserción escolar: programas y proyecciones*. The report finds that the dropout rate in Puerto Rico is 55%

1985 The National Board of Directors unanimously approved the recommendations to relocate the national office to Washington, DC.

ASPIRA of America officially becomes the ASPIRA Association, Inc.

ASPIRA establishes the Institute for Policy Research in Washington, DC. and begins research for *Five Cities High School Dropout Study*.

1986 The first group of Aspirantes go to Wash, DC, as participants in the national component of the Aspira Public Policy Leadership Program

1987 Julia E. Rivera becomes Executive Director of Aspira of NY

1987 The ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research publishes *Northeast Hispanic Needs: A Guide for Action*.

1988 Hilda Rosario becomes the Executive Director of Aspira of NJ

- The Hispanic Community Mobilization for Dropout Prevention begins a national parent-involvement program.
 - ASPIRA of Pennsylvania opens the Antonia Pantoja Community Learning Center.
 - ASPIRA of Puerto Rico begins ASPIRA a la Cima, a comprehensive program for high school dropouts that includes GED tutoring, individual counseling, and job placement.

1989 The ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research produces *Making the Most of Your Child's Education: A Guide for Parents* in both English and Spanish language versions. Both it and its successor, *More Topics for Parents*, are critical and commercial successes.

- The National Board of Directors goes on a Leadership retreat and discusses expansion.
- Aspira and the Educational Testing Service ETS laid out an eight year collaborative agreement to develop products and services to increase the effectiveness of both organizations to fulfill shared commitments to educational equity and access for Puerto Rican Latino students.

1990 The President issues the Executive Order on Excellence in Education for Hispanic Americans. In recognition of its dramatic growth and success, former governor Bob Martinez and First Lady Barbara Bush visit ASPIRA of Florida. ASPIRA releases three reports based on ASPIRA Five Cities High School Dropout Study.

- The Executive Order on Excellence in Education for Hispanic Americans is issued by the President. First Lady Barbara Bush visits Aspira Florida

1991 The ASPIRA National Board of Directors formally accepts a proposal from community leaders in Connecticut to open ASPIRA of Connecticut. ASPIRA of Florida opens the ASPIRA Alternative Middle School called ACCOLADE.

1992 ASPIRA of New York holds ASPIRA Citywide Youth Conference.

ASPIRA of Florida expands its services to some of the rural communities that were devastated by Hurricane Andrew. ASPIRA of New York enhances its work in all of New York City's Boroughs by moving back to a more centrally located Manhattan.

- Aspira Alumni Association Aspira National and Aspira New York receive planning grant from AT&T three day retreat, subsequent 2 year implementation grant AT&T
- Aspira founder Antonia Pantoja received the 1992 Hispanic Heritage Award for Leadership
- Antonio Novello MD US Surgeon General, puts focus on minority health
- Fernando Fuentes becomes Executive Director of Aspira of New Jersey
- Lorraine Cortes Vazquez Executive Director of Aspira of New York

- Ten Parents participants of the ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence program, from ASPIRA of Illinois, campaign and win seats in Chicago's important local school committees.
- ASPIRA of Pennsylvania intensive Proyecto Alcance dropout prevention program earns an Outstanding Program Performance Award from the state. ASPIRA of Puerto Rico begins participating in ASPIRA's national Teachers, Organizations, and Parents for Students (TOPS) Program.

1993 ASPIRA national Board of Directors approved a Five year plan to enable the National Office to continue its work on behalf of the organization and the Puerto Rican/Latino community see

- Roberto Del Rios for Director of Programs becomes Executive Director

1994 President Clinton recognizes ASPIRA for its role in the revised and strengthened Executive Order on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, signed by him in February 1994; ASPIRA participates in signing. ASPIRA co-chairs the Hispanic Education Coalition, an ad hoc group of the major national Latino organizations working on education policy.

- Ronald Blackburn Moreno becomes National Executive Director

1996 ASPIRA initiates organizational capacity development initiative, funded by the Ford Foundation. ASPIRA holds its first National Conference, *Latinos as a Critical Voice*; Preparing for Tomorrow's Leaders in Washington, DC.

- Antonia Pantoja, founding Director of ASPIRA, is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, by President Clinton

1997 Anthony Lopez , former director of development becomes Executive Director of Aspira of NY

1998 ASPIRA National implements the Informational Technology Initiative designed to integrate technologies into all facets of ASPIRA programs.

1999 ASPIRA of New York holds ASPIRA Circle of Achievers Luncheon.

2000 ASPIRA celebrates its 40th Anniversary. ASPIRA establishes 42 Community Technology Centers funded by Power UP and the U. S. Department of Education. ASPIRA secures collection from the Institute for Puerto Rican Art and Culture.